



- In 1864, Abraham Lincoln signed an act of Congress that gave the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias to the State of California to be the first park in the nation. The first State Park Ranger, Galen Clark, was appointed as caretaker at Yosemite.
- In 1890, Congress created a national park surrounding these State lands and in 1905, the California Legislature returned these lands to the Federal government as an addition to Yosemite National Park.
- Meanwhile, interest was growing in preservation of the coastal redwoods in the Santa Cruz Mountains. In 1902, through the efforts of the Sempervirens Club, an area of old growth redwoods was set aside as California Redwoods State Park. It is now known as Big Basin Redwoods State Park. In 1902, a commission was appointed by the governor to administer the park.
- Interest had also been growing in preserving the state's historic sites, and through the influence of such groups as the Native Sons of the Golden West, the gold discovery site at Coloma, Sutter's Fort, and the Russian fur trading post at Fort Ross had been preserved from obliteration.
- The Save-the-Redwoods League was formed in 1918 to preserve these trees along the north coast. Under their leadership, the California State Parks Council was formed with representation from numerous state organizations. The Council started a campaign that resulted in the creation of the State Park Commission and provision of a survey of park needs.
- In 1927, a Division of Parks was established within the Department of Natural Resources, and acquisition of park lands began, with bond funding and gifts from communities, individuals, and organizations.
- By 1940, the State Park System consisted of over 70 parks, beaches, and historical monuments totally over 300,000 acres, purchased at a cost of \$15 million.
- Beginning in 1933, major facilities were constructed through the Civilian Conservation Corps and other Federal Aid programs, supplementing developments begun by the state.

Today the California State Park System has 265 units

**1.3 million acres of land
280 miles of coastline
1500 historic structures
3000 miles of trails**

**2,700 employees
630 miles of lake and river frontage
80 million visitors per year
18,000 campsites & 11,000 picnic sites**